



News Release

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Release 2003-32

ADA COUNTY HEAD START BUSES TO RUN ON CLEAN BURNING B20 BIODIESEL

For Immediate Release
Boise, Idaho - June 19, 2003

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Buses carrying young children in the Ada County Head Start program will now burn clean burning B20 biodiesel as a way to reduce children's exposure to harmful diesel emissions, the Idaho Energy Division announced today.

Two 25-passenger and one 40-passenger diesel-powered buses daily transport 50 to 60 children ages 3-5 years in the local Head Start program. The three buses burn 600-800 gallons of diesel fuel per month.

B20 biodiesel can cut harmful diesel exhaust emissions by upwards of 20 percent compared to regular petroleum diesel. The Environmental Protection Agency has stated that children are the most susceptible to the harmful effects of diesel exhaust, yet typically must ride diesel-powered buses throughout their school years. The B20 fuel is used in school bus fleets around the country in an effort to counteract the dangers.

"We have always been committed to protecting the well being of the children in our programs. One way to do that is by using biodiesel which has been scientifically proven to significantly reduce children's exposure to harmful emissions," said P. J. Luke, the Head Start transportation supervisor.

The three Head Start buses will display special B20 Treasure Valley logos noting the vehicle is powered by clean burning B20 biodiesel.

B20 biodiesel is a fuel made from 20 percent soybean oil blended with 80 percent petroleum diesel. B20 typically costs 10-15 cents more per gallon than regular diesel. However, the B20 Idaho program managed by the Energy Division will buy down the extra cost of the fuel for the Head Start Buses through remainder of this year, according to Dick Larsen, the B20 program manager.

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Head Start Transportation officials say they then will look at permanently converting their diesel fleet to the biofuel.

The Meridian School District currently has six school buses operating on B20. This fall the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) will launch a research project that will move all 200 Meridian school buses on to the B20 fuel.

The Treasure Valley element of the B20 program has already seen more than 80,000 gallons of B20 burned in just over a year. The fuel is also being used in the Magic Valley area where more than 12,000 gallons have been used, Larsen said.

Garbage companies in Meridian and Boise are operating trucks on B20. The City of Nampa also recently converted its entire diesel fleet to B20. More than 30 school and commuter buses in the Magic Valley are also operated on B20.

Idaho Transportation Department incident response units on the Interstate 84 corridor in the Treasure Valley also run on the biofuel mixture.

B20 is available at three public pumps in Idaho: Boise, at the Kicks 66 station on the corner of Emerald and Five Mile; Twin Falls; and Shoshone. For more information, visit the B20 Idaho web site at: **www.idahobiofuel.org**.